

the VA VOICE

Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center
October 29-November 12, 2018



VA Secretary Robert Wilkie Makes First Visit to Spokane - Promoting new Electronic Health Record and VA Community Partners



VA Secretary Robert Wilkie says his first trip to Spokane's Fairchild Air Force Base, stop at Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center, and Spokane's Vet Center were all memorable. The tour of VISN 20 also included stops at Walla Walla, VA's Puget Sound Health Care System, and Anchorage, Alaska. While at MGVAMC ([full story here](#)), Secretary Wilkie addressed leadership and learned more about Veterans expressing satisfaction from their own health care experiences here.

Secretary Wilkie recognized some of MGVAMC's outstanding programs and staff, including Brian Henneman, Chief, Engineering Service. The Secretary also helped dedicate the new 4700 sq. foot Sterile Processing Suite on the 2nd floor - where he received



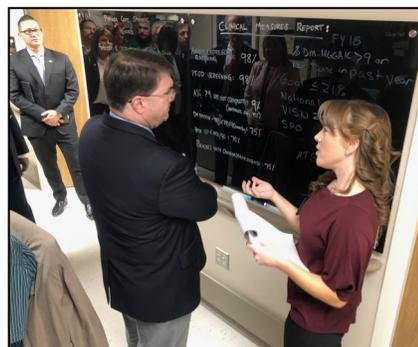
personal briefings on new technology and equipment that will allow SPS to increase capacity, which in turn, will increase access to care for the Veterans we serve.



"There's a perfect mix of active duty, Veteran population in urban and rural settings. Washington State has an outstanding technology base - and access to tech resources, along with the cooperation

of both DOD and VA," explained Secretary Wilkie, as he shared why Spokane's VA and Fairchild AFB are [first to create](#) a new Electronic Health Record (EHR) critical to VA's mission and strategic outlook.

Following a ribbon cutting and demonstrations in SPS, VA Nurse Nicole Rask led Secretary Wilkie and guests through a tour of the current workspaces for MGVAMC's Primary Care (PACT) teams. The Secretary promised his support for expansion of workspace and teaching (GME) opportunities!



Veterans Flu Shot Clinics Proving Popular at MGVAMC

October's annual walk-in Flu Vaccine clinics at Spokane's VA Medical Center continues to be well-received by Veterans.

After the first three full weeks of clinics in both the main entry and in the Primary Care waiting area, more than 4,885 vaccines have already been given to Veterans, VA staff, and volunteers. No appointment is necessary for patients. Employees are asked to [bring form](#) and contact employee health at ext. 6329 to schedule the shot. The [process](#) only takes a moment, is free, and will help protect you during the 2018-'19 flu season!



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED



WWI
100
YEARS

VETERANS DAY

NOVEMBER 11, 2018

Annual Veterans Day Ceremony
Sunday, November 11, 2018 (10am-11am)
Spokane Veterans Memorial Arena

Cerner Corporation and VA-OEHRM Return to Spokane to Begin Health Record Modernization



Electronic Health Record Modernization has begun at Spokane's Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center!

At left, Dr. Robert J. Fischer, MGVAMC's Medical Center Director, accepts John Windom's (VA-OEHRM Director) personal pledge ensuring, "this effort will not fail."

On October 16, the Cerner Corporation and the Office of Electronic Health Record Modernization (OEHRM) staff returned to the Lilac City and presented the results from July's Current State Review (CSR) of Spokane to MGVAMC leadership and launched our formal Site Kick-Off!

Moving forward, MGVAMC staff will see more and more Cerner staff on-station, working with predetermined service lines to gather more information on how we use our current Electronic Health Record (CPRS / VistA). Follow [this link](#) to recent VA News Release working with DOD.

Last week, MGVAMC hosted its first Employee Town Hall meeting to shed more light on the process ahead, and to answer questions and concerns from staff. After seeing first-hand what Cerner Corporation's new product can do, EHRM Project Lead Eddie Steetle says he has, "full confidence in what I've seen from Cerner."



Cerner's Dr. Rehan Waheed, Sr. Physician Executive for EHR stated, "we want VA staff to openly share their concerns and questions to help ensure we reach the desired outcome – without negatively disrupting patient care along the way." For more information, please visit the [MGVAMC SharePoint site](#).

MGVAMC Helps Honor 100 Year Old World War-II Veteran in Moscow, Idaho

Happy Birthday to WW-II Veteran Rose Marie Sharp who turned 100 years old October 21st! Friends and fellow Veterans gathered to honor Rose at the Moscow, Idaho American Legion Post #6 cabin where this former Women's Army Corps dispatcher once served as Post Commander and Chaplain. Since 2005, Ms. Sharp has generously donated more than 700 hours volunteering with our Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) at the Latah County Fairgrounds in Moscow, ID. Above, Veteran Sharp is presented a "Outstanding Volunteer & Lifetime Commendation" award from MGVAMC by friend and Veteran Joanne Meyer of Moscow, Idaho.



Important Upcoming Events

- ◆ MGVAMC [Special Emphasis Pgm Event](#) 11/1
Individuals w/Disabilities 3:00pm in CLC
- ◆ Veterans Last Roll Call 11/4
"Service of Remembrance" 2:30pm in CLC
- ◆ Special Event: WW-I Military Reading 11/7
CLC - 10:30-11:30a.m.
- ◆ Veterans Town Hall meeting 11/8
Bonner Co. Admin Bldg. 5-6:30pm
- ◆ Veterans Day Ceremony 11/11
10:00am at Veterans Memorial Arena
- ◆ Veterans Day Holiday Observed 11/12
- ◆ LEAN Green/Silver Belt training 11/13-14
(2-day training) 8am-4pm in Bldg. 40-225
- ◆ MGVAMC [Holiday Party](#) 12/1
Inn at the River (off Division St.) 6pm



<https://www.facebook.com/VASpokane>
[/twitter.com/spokaneva](https://twitter.com/spokaneva)

Click Here to share suggestions or ideas for improving services or operations at MGVAMC.



Veterans Town Hall

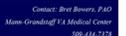
Thursday, November 8, 2018

5:00p.m - 6:30p.m.
Sandpoint, Idaho



Mann-Grandstaff VAMC Leadership and Sandpoint Rural Health Clinic
Welcome Veterans to the Bonner County Administration Building—1500 U.S. Hwy-2, Sandpoint, Idaho

- * Open to the Public
- * Veterans & Families
- * Veterans Service Organizations
- * VA Community Partners
- * Congressional Offices
- * Stakeholder Groups
- * Media may be present



Center: 811 Bonner, Pkwy
Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center
200-434-7373

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Veterans to Benefit from new Ford Donation to DAV

Disabled American Veterans' on-site Transportation Coordinator at MGVAMC was all smiles as Ford Motor Company and local dealer Gus Johnson formally presented a new Ford Flex Sport Utility Vehicle to transport Veterans to their medical appointments.



Jeannie Kyle (pictured above right talking with Gus Johnson) is hoping the attention the donation is generating will inspire more people to volunteer to drive for DAV.

Collectively, volunteer drivers at VA accrue more than 9,100 miles monthly, providing rides to the VA medical center or its clinics for more than 200 Veterans each month. Thanks to the donation from Ford, DAV asks anyone interested in driving to call Jeannie Kyle at (509) 434-7019.



Courage-2 Veteran Portraits on Display at MGVAMC

Myron Bursell, a world class photographer with an affinity for Veterans and the sacrifices they made during their time in service, has returned to MGVAMC through October with the second phase of his display depicting local Veterans.

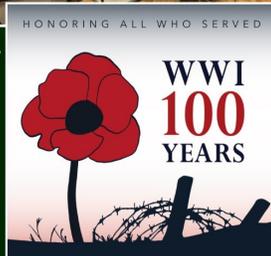
Located in the main corridor to Building -40, the updated display features more than a dozen Veterans, including newly retired USAF Major General Sandy Finan, a former commander of an all-female combat crew for Minuteman-III nuclear missiles. Courage-2 is here through Wed.

Mann-Grandstaff VAMC welcomes a Military Reading: "The Lost Battalion" of WW-I



The "Lost Battalion" is the name given to nine Companies of the U.S. 77th Division, some 600+ men, isolated by German forces for five days, during World War One after an American attack in the Argonne Forrest of France in October 1918. The Germans gave the American GI's two options: "Surrender or Die." They chose a third!

Pictured above is Don Pischner, a U.S. Army Veteran and former Idaho State Legislator. He will tell the lifelong story of two North Idaho men - Ruben Hudlow, "survivor" and Don's own Father Irvin, "rescuer." Two "doughboys" that enlisted together to fight for America in what many believed to be "The War to End All Wars." Hear of their epic combat experiences - suffering, tragedy, heroics of fellow combatants, including airmen, as well as a carrier pigeon named Cher Ami.



Wednesday, November 7, 2018
Community Living Center - MGVAMC
10:30 - 11:30a.m. - Free/Open to All

North Idaho Veteran to Share Reading & Events of Father & Best Friend's Improbable Escape during WW-I

The 100th anniversary of "The War to End All Wars" - World War-1 is this year's theme for Veterans Day. Before MGVAMC joins Veterans, guests, and dignitaries including Spokane Mayor David Condon and Fairchild AFB Wing Commander Col. Derek Salmi at the Veterans Memorial Arena on Veterans Day, a special tribute to WW-I is coming to Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center November 7th!

Army Veteran Don Pischner of nearby Coeur d'Alene, Idaho has his own take on the war, from the stories he learned from his Father's war time experience, captured in a book, the "Lost Battalion" from WW-I.

Pischner, a private pilot and former Idaho State Legislator, is hosting a reading and slide show on this historic battle here at MGVAMC for Veterans, staff, volunteers and guests next week.

The event will be held in the Community Living Center starting at 10:30a.m. and is free / open to everyone!

Army Field Band's Saxophone Quartet Makes Stop in Spokane

Mann-Grandstaff VAMC hosted the U.S. Army Field Band Saxophone Quartet on Tuesday, October 16, 2018. They were here to honor the Veterans and "Jazz" up the halls! The Quartet performed first in the Main Lobby, then in the Primary Care waiting area, and then ended their mini-concert by entertaining Veterans in the Community Living Center. As soon as the music began, it drew crowds of smiling Veterans and VA Employees alike. The Quartet had people swaying, with toes tapping and camera phones held high (please [click here](#) for full story.)

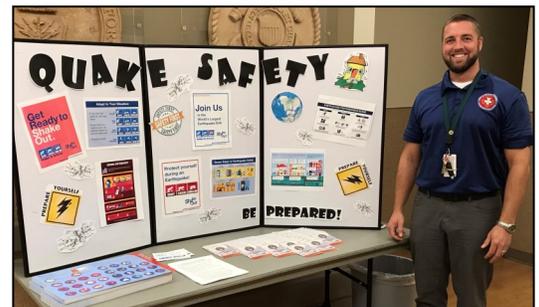
U.S. Army Veteran, Ellen Eberle, was seen tapping her feet while enjoying the concert that was held in the Primary Care area. "I was in Pep Band in High School, and played saxophone," she said enthusiastically, "this is wonderful!"

The United States Army Field Band Saxophone Quartet is an official ensemble of the Musical Ambassadors of the Army. Comprised of members of the Army Field Band's Concert Band saxophone section, the quartet performs for a variety of school recitals, community outreach, and military functions. You can read more about the Saxophone Quartet at www.ArmyFieldBand.com.



Mann-Grandstaff VAMC's Emergency Manager Chris Jaklitsch helped guide staff through the annual "Great Shake Out" annual statewide earthquake drill at 10:18a.m. on October 18th. The one-minute drill asked participants to practice their course of action to "drop, cover, and hold on" should a real earthquake strike.

Many employees and volunteers participated in the drill by following the prompts by a pre-produced overhead announcement for the campaign—aired throughout the hospital at 10:18a.m.



VA and Fairchild AFB Collaborate for Safety

MGVAMC's new Occupational Safety and Health Manager Mark Hodge (standing at left) hosted active duty members from Fairchild AFB's Safety and Industrial Health unit for a tour, walk-about, and view of Mann-Grandstaff VAMC's safety plans and campus recently.

Hodge, who is also a member of the WA Air National Guard, is based at Fairchild AFB and is working to build new partnerships and collaboration with their team and our VA's Quality, Safety, and Value Service and its Chief Sam McComas.



MGVAMC Staff Honor October as National Physical Therapy Month



Above (2nd from right in front) is Jeannette Christiansen, Chief of Physical Therapy at MGVAMC, praising her entire team of therapists (including clinics) who gathered for a rare group photo in Spokane!

Meet Kristin "Kristi" Young



a retired Air National Guard member from Fairchild AFB, and MGVAMC's new Communications Specialist. Kristi is serving VA as our SharePoint site Administrator. An Oregon native who is passionate about her horses

and country life, "Kristi" is part of our newly expanded Public Affairs team and can be reached at 434-7784. Welcome Kristi - we're glad you are here!

VA Honors National Hispanic Heritage Month

The first American pilot shot down during the Vietnam War Lt. Col. Edgar Alvarez Jr. was of Hispanic descent. In our nation's history, more than 1.2-million Hispanic-Americans have served the U.S. Armed Forces and more than 60 have earned the Congressional Medal of Honor. At right, VA's Gordon Graves welcomed Richard Ortega (USAF Ret.) for MGVAMC's Hispanic Heritage celebration.



Ortega and his wife embraced the idea of learning new cultures as they traveled the world in the Air Force. Ortega, a 4th generation Hispanic American grew up in Fresno, CA.



"We need to strive to celebrate all cultures and to embrace our diversity," he said. "Think about it - we all grew up with memories of our childhood—the food, music, family and neighborhood events. The differences lie with our respect and acceptance of other people's backgrounds... and help teach people, especially our children, to learn to share and be proud of what makes us unique, but also be respectful to others." Ortega is pictured with event host Gordon Graves, Veteran Employment Coordinator for VA.

MGVAMC Staff Enjoy Dual Purpose "Pink & Purple Walk"

MGVAMC's Maleia Matt (at left) Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Coordinator was joined by VA community partners for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. And Kari Tabino (below right) and our Clinical Education and Women Veterans Health program joined for a fun and new way to recognize Breast Cancer Awareness Month at VA!



Mann-Grandstaff VAMC to Support Avista Corp's. new Solar Energy Farm.

The Mann-Grandstaff VA Medical Center is a major purchaser of electrical power from Spokane's Avista Utilities Corporation. A recent dedication by the utility's venture with Strata Solar Corporation included recognition by WA Governor Jay Inslee and Utility Executives thanking organizations,



including Mann-Grandstaff VAMC for choosing to participate in Avista Corp's. Renewable Energy Incentive program. Now, Avista Corp. can provide clean energy solutions to larger corporate users in Eastern

Washington.

The new Adams Neilson Solar Farm spans nearly 200 acres near Lind, WA—where more than 81,700 solar panels now tilt and rotate with the movement of the sun. Energy produced by the panels can create 28 MW Direct Current, enough to power 4,000 homes annually. MGVAMC's Richard Fries, pictured with Gov. Inslee above, says Spokane's VA purchases more than \$500,000.00 of power annually from Avista Corp. Fries and Engineering Service's Laura Sliger made the trek to Lind, WA (about 90-minutes west of Spokane) with Associate Director Rick Richards and Sandra Payne where Avista Corporation recognized MGVAMC's support and participation in the new venture.



VA News Links

[VA Pulse](#)

[VA Insider](#)

[Explore VA](#)

[VCS Online Shopping](#)

[Hey VA Notes](#)

[This Week at VA](#)

[Gears of Government](#)

[Gov Delivery](#)

DECEMBER 1, 2018
Old Hollywood
 Red Lion River Inn 6:00pm—10:00pm

ESCAPE FOR A NIGHT OF FUN & GLAMOUR

* DINNER * * DANCING * * PRIZES *

A set of blocked rooms available for: The VAMC Employee Association rate

EARLY BIRD TICKETS: 10/9—10/31 \$80.00 each
 GENERAL TICKETS: 11/7—11/23 \$95.00 each

Contact for tickets: * Shannon Paulsen 434-7860 * Renee Deore 434-7505 * Sandra Airey 434-7781 or 724-1112

Veterans and VA Community Partners Appreciate VA Supported Employment

Veterans and VA staff are excited about the future as a result of the positive outcomes and “real-life” changes happening through one of Behavioral Health Service's work-therapy programs. The last full week in October is designated National Therapeutic and Supported Employment Services week— which in Spokane, is helping produce an 80% decrease in psychiatric hospitalizations for VA-enrolled Veterans!

Chief Dr. Quinn Bastian and BHS Mental Health Professional and Supervisor Kevin Bratcher are so optimistic with the positive outcomes, they hosted a brief ceremony to recognize our (TSES) specialists, and then watched the ceremony reveal an inspirational testimonial by a Veteran who says they and VA [TSES] turned his life around!



Pictured at right is Kevin Bratcher, presenting Craig Conklin, Nick Sangil, and James Campbell - all Veterans, recognized for the outstanding work as TSES specialists - “helping fellow Veterans live full, richer, productive lives.” MGVAMC leadership also credits VA Community Partners for their support of Veterans through TSES, including Work-Source Spokane, Artisans, and Spokane County/WA DVA Veteran Services.

Also pictured below is James Hundley (USMC Veteran) who proclaimed his thanks - since turning his life around legally and financially, including a new marriage, family, job, and positive outlook since enrolling in VA health care! Hundley says the TSES staff and their continued support have taught him to, “never give up, because our greatest successes can come from failure. To this day, I have VA's Craig Conklin who simply drives by and stops at my work to see how I'm doing? That's the type of respect and



commitment VA is showing me and its great.”

Below, BHS Chief, Dr. Quinn Bastian praises Bratcher and the TSES team for their great work!

